

Annual Report | FY2019-20

Town of Gilbert Emergency and Minor Home Repair Program

Organization Mission/Vision

Who we are....

This program within the Community Resources Division has a mission is to assist income qualified homeowners with emergency home repairs.

Using grant money allocated to the Town of Gilbert by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, this program connects professional trade contractors with local residents experiencing home emergency issues.

The goals and objectives of the national CDBG Program are reflected in Gilbert: to assist low-to moderate-income residents in need; to address health and safety issues; and to prevent or eliminate slum and blight.

Town of Gilbert has received CDBG funding for the Emergency and Minor Home Repairs Program since 1998, and has repaired almost 925 homes and assisted thousands of residents, young and old.



What we do...

Utilizing the talents of local licensed and registered contractors, the Town of Gilbert helped 79 residences with emergency repairs during FY 2019-20. Prompt response is a focus of the program with all applicants responded to within 72 hours. Of the total, almost one-third received same-day repairs. A dedicated and responsive local contracting pool makes this possible.

...And whom we help

Of 79 addresses served this year, we assisted 199 people. The year prior, we served 78 residences... program demand is growing. The average household size is about 4.98 residents per address, indicating families in need. And of those households,

- 12 were senior citizens (elderly)
- 12 were single mothers with dependent children
- 8 were handicapped or disabled

The Median Household Income in Gilbert was \$92,350 in 2018 according to U.S. Census data.

Demographic reporting of the residents we assisted in FY 2019-20 revealed the following:

- 28 homeowners identified as Very Low Income. That's a family of two earning no more than \$17,500 per year
- 35 homeowners identified as Low Income. That's a family of two earning no more than \$35,040 per annually
- 16 homeowners identified as Moderate Income. That's a family of two earning no more than \$46,650 per year

Some are old; some are new

The average age of a home visited by Gilbert Emergency Home Repairs program was 31 years old. The newest home having been built within the last 8 years and the oldest home having been built in 1915!

All the right resources to help

Gilbert Emergency Home Repairs staff includes a Housing Rehabilitation Program Coordinator, a Community Resources Supervisor, the partnership team of specialists with AZCEND – the administrators of the Gilbert Community Action Program (CAP) office – and two dozen area contractors and material suppliers. Town of Gilbert hires only licensed and bonded contractors with excellent standing as verified through Arizona Registrar of Contractors. All contractors are vetted through the Town's stringent procurement and screening standards. More than one-third of our contracting pool is Gilbert owned and operated. Some contractors have been program venders for more than a decade of service, and all are experts in their respective fields. The Town added three new local contractors to the vender pool in 2019-20 in various trade disciplines.

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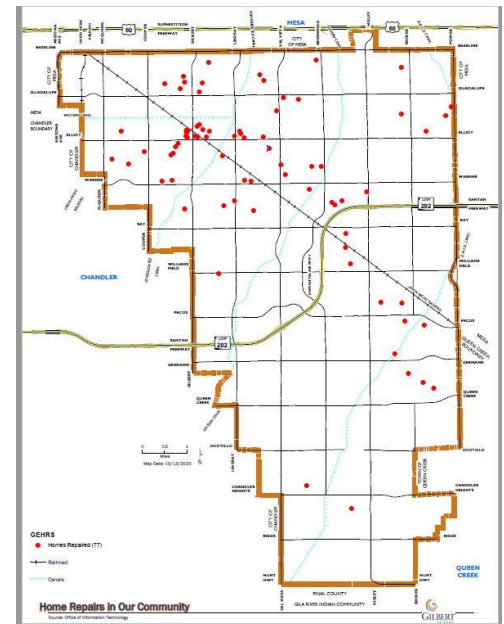
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Financial Summary

Town of Gilbert spent **\$259,307.14** on repairs to 79 different addresses throughout the community this past year.

The average expense was **\$3,282.37** per household.

- 37 of these homes required plumbing repairs
- 45 homes required air conditioning repairs
- 12 homes required roofing repairs
- 25 homes required general construction related repairs (e.g. drywall repairs after abating roof leaks; gate replacements; masonry wall or stucco repairs, etc.)
- 27 homes required more than just one type of repair function to address health and safety concerns (including additional items found during a home inspection while identifying a single issue like an air conditioning repair, and staff identifying a plumbing leak or broken window pane).



FY2019-20 Highlights

A year of extreme challenge



Spring and summer of 2020 brought about a unique set of challenges for the GEHRS program.

The national response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis saw more Gilbert residents working from home than ever before. Many of our new residents to the program saw a loss of income or children in a home school environment. Additional time confined to home meant additional use of plumbing, electrical and climate-control conditions.

Unusually warm weather conditions with over 140 days of 100-degree plus temperatures taxed air-conditioning systems to the breaking point. That's the equivalent of more than 20.5 weeks of triple digit temperatures.

From late April into the new fiscal year, the most common service demand was for air conditioning repairs and replacements. A half-dozen HVAC vendors rose to the challenge and several offered after-hours and weekend service calls to accommodate the busy work load demand.

The long dry summer was marked with little monsoon storm rainfall, although severe windstorms did damage several roofs, requiring significant repairs. The

program performed 5 major roofing repairs with the newly implemented Roofing Repair and Replacement Program. Contractors painted 3 home exteriors under the new Exterior Repaint Program to avoid and eliminate HOA related liens and fines in multiple areas of our community. Both programs have a waiting list.

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Feedback from our residents: what homeowners are saying about it

"Excellent customer service! I don't know how I could afford home repairs due to my limited income. It always comes through."

"From the start to the end of the process we were provided with amazing customer service and would like to thank the Town of Gilbert and staff for all the support."

"This is a wonderful program. This has helped my disabled brother-in-law with his home repairs. His house is over 30-years-old in Gilbert and has needed help in keeping it up."

The year ahead...

The new Gilbert fiscal year began in July, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and a record-breaking heat wave. It's apparent the fall-out from the public health crisis will greatly impact the need for additional GEHRS program service in the coming year. As a result, staff anticipates additional program demand to impact this year's budget allocation. All repairs are viewed for urgent need as a priority.

Looking forward

As the community evolves and grows, the local housing stock continues to age resulting in increased need. This challenges the program to do more without a budgetary increase and in light of rising construction costs. Therefore, staff will continue to develop partnerships not only within municipal departments but also with faith-based groups, non-profits and the business community to bridge gaps in offering assistance when the program's financial resources or limitations aren't quite sufficient to meet the needs.

GEHRS has reached out to a variety of area non-profits serving the community. Plans are underway for a partnership opportunity with Ability360 of Phoenix – a non-profit serving the Valley's mobility impaired residents – to share projects wherever practical to do so. Another newly established partnership is with Rebuilding Together Valley of the Sun – for assisting residents with fall prevention programs and health and safety repairs in qualifying homes. Gilbert homeowners will be made aware of Maricopa County's Weatherization Program for potential assistance.

The Town of Gilbert's Emergency Home Repair program began its 21th year of service in 2019. Staff goal for FY2019-20 was to assist a minimum of 68 homeowners. Within the first quarter reporting period, staff was more than 50% of the way from achieving the goal.



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